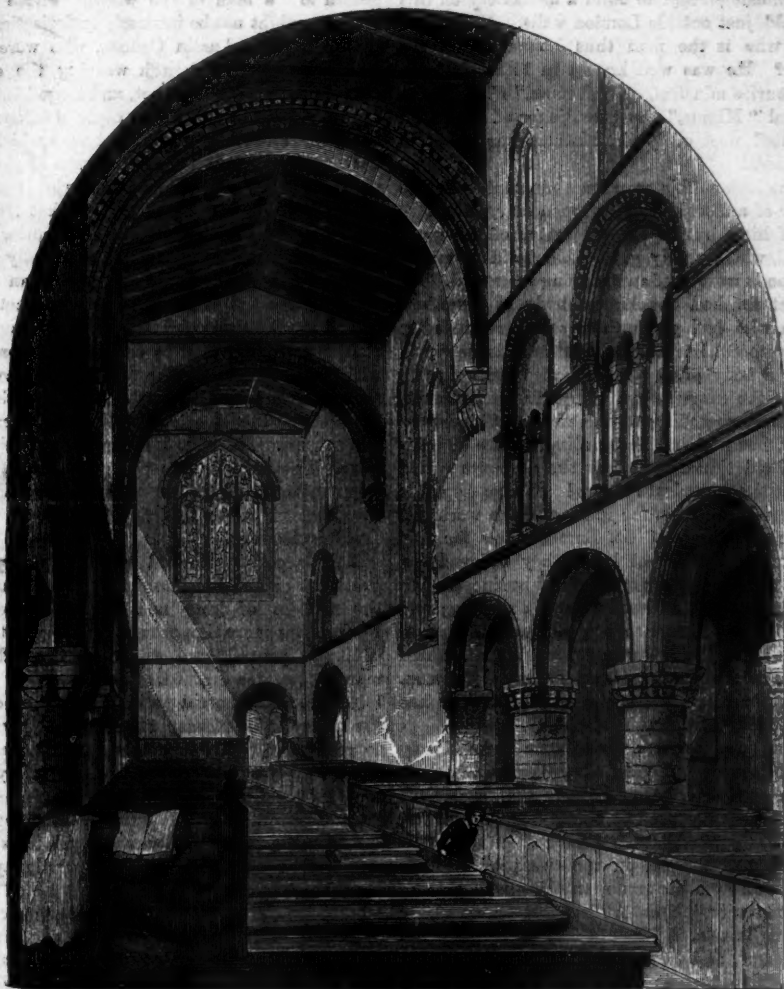


THE GUYVER

Saturday, September 14, 1867.



ST. BARTHOLOMEW'S CHURCH, SMITHFIELD.

ST. BARTHOLOMEW'S, SMITHFIELD.

THE PRIORY; THE HOSPITAL; THE CHURCH, AND TOMB OF BAHERE, THE ROYAL MINSTREL.

ONE day, in the year 1102, groups of children, beggars, and idlers were watching the proceedings of a man at the east end of Smithfield. He was superintending a party of workmen

who were tracing the foundations of a building. There was no doubt about their object. Many of the people looked on the chief workman with curiosity and reverence. Strange tales were told

about him. Some whispered of his free jests in the palace, and his powers of music and song; others hinted of past dissipation, love of pomp, and of the fascinating flatteries by which he won the ears of the great. But the detractors were hushed by accounts of his marvellous repentance, and of the awful vision in which St. Bartholomew had commanded him to build a monastery on this very field, just outside London walls.

But who is the man thus honoured by the apostle? He was well known in 1102. Rahere, the favourite minstrel, or "gleeman," of Henry I., the royal "Mimus," the great joker of the court, the petted poet of Queen Matilda, was about to turn monk!

Let us look at this man for a moment. As the founder of a dissolved priory, men may now think little of him; but as the originator of the great hospital, which yearly gives liberal aid to multitudes, he is worthy of an enduring memorial. He has just finished thanking a body of volunteer masons, who had given their services gratis for one day to St. Bartholomew, and he is now welcoming a body of new-comers, who are going to work on the same terms. A queer arrangement, this seems, according to the nineteenth century notions, but not considered a bad stroke of business in old times. See how the accounts would stand in the canonical ledgers! Rahere kept his cash—profitable that, for him—and the workmen got the patronage of St. Bartholomew for this world and the next—at least, they believed so. Rahere was clearly a good man of business. We note his pleasant, off-hand way of speaking; and though his countenance has a thoughtful cast, there is a frequent gleam of mirthfulness, which reminds us of the court jester and royal gleeman. The serious air is becoming to a man who has seen and heard St. Bartholomew.

Are any readers anxious to scan more closely the countenance of Rahere, they may gratify their laudable curiosity. The features of this ancient minstrel, as sculptured by a long-forgotten artist, are in St. Bartholomew's Church. The recumbent effigy of Rahere, in the dress of a Black Canon, rests on his tomb on the north side of the communion-table. At his feet an angel, or a queen, kneels, holding a shield bearing the priory arms, and on each side a kneeling canon holds a Bible, open at Isaiah li. This was, doubtless, the minstrel's favourite Scripture.

If tradition can be trusted, the face is a portrait of Rahere. It suggests the idea of a man who might, as the mood took him, indulge in "divinest melancholy" one hour, and the next, in "quips, and cranks, and wanton wiles." His biography exists, written by one of the canons who knew him well; but this gentleman seems to have been more intent on describing the amazing miracles

wrought at the newly-founded monastery, than on giving a clear portrait of its first prior.

Such are a few of the glimpses we obtain of St. Bartholomew's founder. Let us now glance at his work. The scheme was liberal, involving two foundations—a priory and an hospital. The plan of the monastery was that which would be suggested to "a man of the world," whose prepossessions might not be intensely ecclesiastical. The priory was for Austin Canons, who were hardly classed as monks, though wearing the cassock, covered with a white rochet, and large black cloak over all. These canons were especial cultivators of the beard, often displaying specimens which would have made some modern gentlemen almost die of envy. First-rate architects, too, were the Black Canons; and there was a tradition that Byzantine workmen aided in the building of the priory. The hospital also differed from those usually erected in the twelfth century, being partly an orphan asylum. As the Black Canons could not be expected to take the supervision of such a foundation, Rahere was compelled to establish, in connection with his priory, an "order of sisters," who might act as nurses in the hospital. Such was the truly original and liberal scheme of the court minstrel and satirist. His wide aims have kept his name alive. The once famous priory has fallen, a mere fragment only of its noble church remains; but the hospital is to this day the noblest of the London charities.

Rahere, perhaps, looked upon the priory as his great work; and his intense zeal, combined with the support of king and queen, succeeded in raising the more important building by the year 1113. It proved hard work. Smithfield was a marsh; that was drained, and the swampy hollows filled up. The horrid gallows stood too close to the priory to be pleasant; Rahere got permission to remove it to the opposite side of Smithfield. He probably saw the church of the priory consecrated in the year 1123, when three Greek nobles from Constantinople are said to have predicted the future fame of the monastery. This anticipation did not rest on the great popularity of St. Bartholomew, who had never won much general admiration. The artists had, unfortunately, represented him in a pitiable and unpicturesque state. A saint holding a knife in one hand and his own skin in the other, might excite our wonder, but would not gratify a craving after the beautiful. The pictures might truly represent the ancient tradition, that St. Bartholomew had been flayed alive by the heathen; it was very dreadful, but it was unlovely. There were other pictures, indeed, especially in Notre Dame, at Paris, representing the saint as the physician, healing the Armenian princess; but the more terrible representation had been stamped on the minds of men.

Even Michael Angelo, in his great picture of the "Last Judgment," thus depicted the martyred apostle. The knife came to be especially associated with the name of this saint, and it was long the custom at Croyland Abbey to distribute "Bartholomew knives" to all visitors on the 24th of August.

The monastery soon became famous, not simply from the medical skill of the canons, or the devotion of the "sisters," but from the miracles then believed to have been performed under the special direction of the patron saint. Bartholomew's Hospital can show some bright names in the list of her physicians and surgeons. But how must Harvey, Abernethy, and Pott have despaired of rivalling the marvellous cures effected in "Old Bartholomew's." Perhaps Abernethy would have bluntly declared all the reports "a sham." Then what shameful fibs has that respectable lady, Dame Tradition, told about St. Bartholomew's! Here is one case; let the doctors examine it. A man named Osborne was sadly afflicted; it was a case of terrible malformation, the right hand being fastened to the left shoulder, and the left hand fastened to the head. There's a complication for a surgeon! What would Bartholomew's do with such a case to-day? Would not Osborne, after many consultations, be "given up?" Would he not be hired by a Barnum, and shown to an admiring public, "admission one shilling each?" Not so did they manage in the days of old. Osborne was carried to the church, soon after it was finished, and there St. Bartholomew cured him, without any "clinical lecture," or consultation with the faculty!

Does any reader wonder that, after such cures, the fame of the priory was spread far wider than the repute of the modern Bartholomew's? The canons could not only aid the deformed, they promised the help of St. Bartholomew to all sailors who should duly present their offerings. A fair wind and quiet sea would, of course, be cheaply purchased, even by liberal donations.

But the priory did not rely only on the gifts of devotees who received miraculous cures, or on the acknowledgments of forgetful mariners; large profits were derived from the famous fair held in Smithfield. Cockneydom even yet remembers renowned "Bartlemy Fair." What is safe from decay, since even that has died out? What a stir it made once; when for fourteen days one wild tumult of fantastic mirth kept up a roar of laughter round the old priory walls. Let us not suppose, however, that Rahere obtained from Henry I. the licence to hold the fair simply to give London a bout at merry-making. The prior held firmly to the axiom, "Business first, pleasure after." His fair was established to afford a first-rate market for respectable traders. It answered

well. The cloth fair became noted; and he who strolls through the narrow and gloomy lane now called Cloth Fair, will hardly recall the uproarious activity of fair-time in the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries. In later times, the Lord Mayor and Sheriffs proclaimed the fair; and three royal charters, those of Henry I., Henry VIII., and Edward VI., upheld its privileges. No rank of society was above going to Bartholomew's; princes, lords, and ladies ventured into the crowd; statesmen, dramatists, poets, and philosophers studied the people there. Of course, the taste of the multitude was chiefly consulted, and amply provided for. The thousands who flocked to see a Blondin, will not laugh at the Bartholomew Fair folks, who gazed with delight at "the Dutch woman cutting side-capers, upright capers, cross capers, and back capers on the tight rope." The "doing of somersets," and the "flying over thirty swords," further delighted the athletic tastes of the million. The celebrated traveller and explorer of the Pyramids, Belzoni, exhibited at one of the booths as "the Strong Man," soon after his arrival in England, in 1803.

The searchers after "wonders upon wonders" found in the fair a vast museum. In one show was the man with "one head and two bodies;" not far off was to be seen and admired "a fairy child with three legs;" and this was matched, in the adjoining booth, by "a cock with three legs." Simon Paap, the "Dutch Dwarf," had his fair admirers then, as Tom Thumb has in our own age. "Toby, the learned pig," was rivalled in his fame by the "learned cats." But learning was not left wholly to the animals. In the mulberry gardens of the priory, scholars held logical contests on difficult points in grammar during fair time. Even after the suppression of the monastery, the boys of St. Paul's, Westminster, and St. Anthony's kept up the old custom by disputations and speeches. The successful competitors received bows and silver arrows as prizes. It grieves us to confess that the boys often caught the spirit of the fair, one school calling the other nicknames, and ending by a general battle. A "St. Anthony's pig" and a "Paul's pigeon" seem to have been the especial war-notes of two schools.

The theatres were the pride of the fair. Imagine, if that be possible, a play entitled "The Downfall of the Pope," the characters on the stage being Queen Elizabeth, three bishops, three cardinals, the Pope, and, to complete the whole, Satan himself! Another theatrical manager, Dr. Haynes, having acted a piece, entitled "The Devil and the Pope," and being called to account for this freedom, had the audacity to assert that he really did it "out of respect for the Pope." It may be easily imagined that the authorities required stringent powers to keep such a fair from breaking out into the wildest

excess. A pie-powder* court had been established from the earliest times, to decide disputes on the spot. It was held in the Cloth Fair, in a room of an inn known as the "Hand and Shears." A public-house now stands on the old site, still having the same sign. But no pie-powder court could long restrain such a fair, especially when its character as a place of trade was lost. By degrees, "respectability" set her face against "Bartlemy;" the time was shortened to three days, the lord mayors ceased to proclaim it, and the ancient fair may be said to have ended about the year 1855.

Smithfield is a place where man's wickedness and man's folly have met together. The executions on the ancient gallows formerly standing near Cow Lane, and the cruel martyrdoms in front of the priory, are in startling contrast with the wild buffoonery of the fair. The Bartholomew's Eve of 1305 was not soon forgotten. The hero of Scotland, William Wallace, was, on the evening of the 23rd of August, dragged to the gibbet at the "Elms," hanged, cut down alive, and his body quartered in presence of the multitude. Not less miserable was the spectacle of Protestants burning Protestants here. In 1575, two Anabaptists were committed to the flames, "with roaring and crying." Truly, the "roaring" was undignified, but very natural. Poor Bartholomew Leggett, the Socinian, had the doubtful honour of being the last burnt in Smithfield for religious opinions, in 1611.

The annals of the priory present us with no very remarkable man, nor was its history marked by stirring incidents. The house prospered, and the canons were satisfied. Once, indeed, the even tenour of their monastic life was broken by nothing less than an actual "assault and battery," in 1250, on Boniface of Savoy, Archbishop of Canterbury, who asserted his jurisdiction over them. We must, however, confess that the archbishop "gave the first blow," by striking the sub-prior, and even tearing that gentleman's "cope." The bearded canons thereupon knocked down the archbishop, whose armed men came to the rescue, and a most unmonastic riot ensued. The city actually rose in arms, to defend the privileges of the priory against the archbishop. Pugnacious times were these—a word and a blow, the blow often coming first.

When the priory was dissolved, at the Reformation, the revenue was estimated at £653 15s. yearly. The buildings were sold in 1544 to Sir R. Rich, Attorney-General, for £1,064 11s. 3d., the church alone being excepted, that having for a long period been used by the parish jointly with the canons. The nave had already been destroyed, the choir, west aisles, and transept alone remain-

* So named from a corruption of the old Norman-French words, "pied poudreux," meaning dusty feet.

ing.* Gradually, nearly all the rich architecture of the priory disappeared; the last part of the cloisters fell in 1834, having been long used as a stable. The noble gateway, forming the entrance from Smithfield into the "Close," is the richest specimen now to be found of the ancient structure. This alone would enable us to form some true idea of the grandeur which belonged to the whole.

The existing church of St. Bartholomew consists of the choir and aisles, all the rest of the ancient pile having perished. The transepts were destroyed by fire in 1830. The ancient chancel is the part called "the Purgatory," long used as a charnel-house!

If we look at the exterior of the church only, scarcely a trace of its former design can be seen, and the ugly brick tower, raised in the seventeenth century, makes us almost hate brick-work. Let us enter the church; there some traces, at least, of the ancient plan are visible. These Norman pillars remind us of the days of Rahere, while the remains of Early English, Decorated, and Perpendicular work suggest the long succession of changes through which the structure has passed. The richly-sculptured tomb and effigy of the minstrel-founder, and the oriel window of Prior Bolton projecting from the triforium, are the most prominent architectural objects.

Though the church is but a fragment of the former structure, the work now in progress will, doubtless, do much towards sound restoration and preservation. The lowering of the present floor to its former level, with the restoring of the apse, clerestory windows, and west end of the church, will contribute to this end.

Some readers may here ask how the hospital escaped when the priory was suppressed. Many causes existed for the preservation of the one, which were wanting in the case of the other. The hospital estates had, fortunately, been always kept distinct from those of the monastery. The forfeiture of the one, therefore, did not involve the other. The hospital was felt by all to be useful; whereas only a few would venture to say as much for the Black Canons in the sixteenth century. The hospital was also, practically, a civil and secular institution; thus no ecclesiastical warfare could be promoted by an attack upon that. Therefore it came to pass that Henry VIII. and Edward VI. both concurred in confiding Rahere's great foundation to the care of the City of London.

The hospital might fitly have borne the name of its minstrel-founder; but he cannot be forgotten while this noble institution continues to alleviate the sufferings of thousands from generation to generation.

* Even the bells are said to have been sold, the purchaser being the neighbouring parish of St. Sepulchre's.

THE LESSON OF THE ALGÆ.

I HAVE watched the algæ clinging
To the overhanging rocks;
Floating in the heaving waters,
Patient to their rudest shocks.

When the sun was up they languished,
Lay like lifeless things along;
Tired and withered in the sunlight,
When most other plants grow strong.

Learn, weak heart, not calm nor sunshine
Nerves thy life to bear along;
In the heavy storm-cloud's shadow,
Quit thee like a man—be strong.

Oh, my soul, when waves are rolling,
Bravely bear their wildest shock;
They will wash thee, mount thee higher
On the everlasting Rock. R. S. R.

THE ANGELS, AND WHAT THEY SAID AT THE ASCENSION.

BY THE REV. WILLIAM JOSEPH SMITH, B.A.

"Why stand ye gazing up into heaven?"—Acts i. 11.

THERE is a stage in the history of a life, when a person is passing from childhood into boyhood or girlhood. It is the most critical period of the "teens." Hitherto, the faculties of observation and imitation have been almost solely employed. Memory has been powerful, and this was the season to cultivate it; but we may doubt whether an original idea has crossed the child's mind, although children are keenly inquisitive, and rapidly draw inferences. Reflection and the ability to hold chains of reasoning are of later growth. Now, however, as they are passing into this next stage of life, the mind takes a great leap; a new world of thought is discovered, and begins to be investigated; and the first exercise of these higher powers develops what we call imagination. Poetry and romance are eagerly devoured, and the fancy runs riot in self-created dreams.

It would appear as if the faculties of the man, dormant in infancy, had been aroused by education, until he became conscious of how valuable a servant he had within him to do his bidding and minister to his enjoyment. As yet the mind, whilst beginning to think and reflect, has not sufficient subject-matter upon which to exercise this faculty. Meanwhile, in the interval before years of diligent study and collection of facts have furnished it with food to digest, it is tempted to provide its own facts in the form of pure imagination. Shirking the labour and the patience required for careful acquisition of materials for its manufactures, it betakes itself to the deceitful resources of fancy. The wish is father to the thought. Every passion is impersonated as a real existence. What was at first but poetry and sentiment, degenerates into castle-building and an evil habit of introspection. The poetry is soon drained out, and the lees of a vicious sentimentalism remain, until the youth, now verging towards manhood,

spends his days in alternations of feverish excitement and equally feverish discontent.

The truth is, that imagination, rightly regarded, is but the free play of those faculties which go to the formation of sound judgment; and in order to this, it must have solid sustenance. To illustrate our meaning familiarly, we may liken the mental machinery to a great mill, whose wheels are constantly driven round with amazing velocity. They must grind, and when there is no grist, are rapidly wearing out themselves. It is easy to dwell in dreamland, and for a season very fascinating; but the passion for this increases upon a young person to the destruction of healthy intellectual vigour. Imagination without information is a fire-balloon. it ascends and ascends in its own brilliancy, until it sets itself on fire and comes to nothing. Doing nothing but reading sensation novels, and picturing fairy but impossible day-dreams, is sure to make man or woman the creature of painful disappointment, querulous, dejected, and with a wasted life. On the other hand, imagination corrected and restrained, is the pioneer of all the arts. With it a man carves out his career, and arranges for the morrow: with it the architect draws his plans, the engineer designs his machinery, the merchant entertains his projects, and the historian is enabled to reproduce the scenes and movements and meaning of the past. Therefore, my young friends, whoever you may be, be active and practical as well as enthusiastic and earnest, else will the angels rebuke you, and say, "Why stand ye gazing up into heaven?"

But I apprehend there is something in the history of spiritual life analogous to what we have been describing in the mental experience. There is, to the young Christian, a danger somewhat similar in form to that threatening the young man. In the first flush and fervour of Christian zeal, in the first rich joy of Christian experience,

there is a delight so new, and a rapture so intense, that the whole soul is carried away with it. In that gush of happiness there is an exquisite foretaste of heaven. The man aforesaid sensual, has found his spirit tingle with new, and pure, and holy sensations. The trembling sinner, who dreaded death and the terrible after-world, has realised that love of God which casteth out fear. The low, grovelling creature has risen to the ineffable dignity of a saint of God. In the transport of such moments, a man may seem to live through an eternity of joy, the emotions within are so unfathomable and infinite. Can it be wondered that we should wish these feelings to be prolonged for ever? Certainly not. Only, in this world that is impossible. God gives men these blessed experiences to stimulate them forward. If we surrender ourselves to a vain longing for what is granted but in measure, we shall soon become selfish and murmurers.

Besides, where, then, would be our love and solicitude for our fellow men? Where our likeness to Him, who stripped himself of glory and happiness that he might walk the path of pain and shame, and go about doing good? Peter, on the hill of transfiguration, realised how good it was to be there. In a state of mingled astonishment, awe, and happiness, he knew not what he said. He wanted to raise at once three tents, and in that simple fashion sojourn there for ever.

What was going on in the valley below? There was a poor lad tossed about by the Evil One, foaming and writhing in indescribable torture. There was his poor father piteously beseeching help from the disciples. There were those disciples, who had not been up into the mount, who had not won the spirit-strength which comes of the soul's deepest devotion,—the might that springs of prayer and fasting—and who therefore could do nothing in the case; and there was the multitude looking on, and sneering at what they took to be the failure of this new Gospel.

It was time for the Saviour and the favoured ones to descend into the world of common existence.

The complete cycle of Christian duty, therefore, contains and requires public endeavour to benefit our fellow-man, as well as private devotion and entire surrender of the soul to God. Neither must be omitted. Both are requisite. The Saviour himself said, "This kind can come forth by nothing, but by prayer and fasting" (Mark ix. 29.) And his directions on the subject of private prayer are very explicit: "Enter into thy closet, and when thou hast shut thy door, pray to thy Father which is in secret; and thy Father which seeth in secret shall reward thee openly" (Matt. vi. 6.) Still, there are two great commandments, and not one only; and further, the second

is "like unto," that is to say, the necessary complement of, the first. Love to our neighbour is inexplicably bound up with our love to God. No man can obey the one efficiently without, at the same time, fulfilling the other. The monk, who retreats to his cell, and bids the vain world begone, does it, doubtless, from the loftiest motives; but it is no less a mistake. The hermit in his grotto, the anchorite in the desert on his pillar, are not so near to heaven as the pious cobbler, who works on his bench the day through, in that one room where his family are about him, and customers coming in, and which does duty for shop, work-room, sitting-room, kitchen, and bedchamber. A distinction too sharply drawn between sacred and secular is a bad one. All secular is transformed into sacred by a holy spirit; whilst psalms and prayer, in the house of God itself, are unutterably profane and secular, when done in lip-worship. Seasons of closer communion with our Father must always be varied with periods of active, resolute labour in his vineyard, else will he take away from us altogether the opportunity of such Divine pleasure. "Why stand ye gazing up into heaven?"

For, if we examine it, every gift of God entails upon us a corresponding duty; nor does he bestow on any man a monopoly—a privilege for himself only. When the promise was made to the patriarch, "In blessing I will bless thee," there was added the obligation, "and in thy seed shall all the nations of the earth be blessed." God's blessings resemble the flowers in the flower-pots outside a cottage-window; they are pretty, and their smell is sweet, and they rejoice the eyes of the cottager. But he may not keep this delight wholly to himself. The eyes of passers-by are feasted with the sight, and the neighbours breathe their odours. Only let him take them in out of sight, and shut them up close in his room, the light of day and the air of heaven barred out, the plants die, their odour is turned into a poison, and he is fain to rid himself of what was once a joy. A man must enjoy God's mercies out of doors. When he buttons up his pockets and fastens his windows, and buries his talent in a napkin, he has turned the blessing into a deadly curse.

It would be most wicked to depreciate any method by which a Christian would seek to realise more constantly the presence of God. We know, too painfully, our proneness to forget God, and the earthliness of desire which this produces. Nevertheless, there is always a tendency in Christian thought to overrate religious ecstasy. We believe there are countless young persons, of fervent religious temperament, who are much tempted to, perform their daily secular duties irksomely, and as though they despised them.

They yearn, naturally enough, for diviner conditions of life; but, in impatient effort to attain them, some rush into the excitement of revivals, others into the seductive seclusion of "retreats." It is partly a result of our overheated civilisation. How sweet we picture it to be, to escape from the fret and harass, the bustle and the cares, the dust and turmoil of street and market, of office and of shop. Wearied with the struggle of the inward against the outward man; fainting in the endeavour to sustain Christian conduct in the midst of continual drawings towards worldliness; hot, tired, and adust with the angry strife, how eagerly does the heart respond to the cry, "O that I had wings like a dove! for then would I fly away, and be at rest. Lo, then would I wander far off, and remain in the wilderness." Yet Elijah went into the wilderness, and was not content; he then prayed God to take him away altogether.

Men want always to *feel happy*, and feeling happy is only one side of Christian character; *doing good*, is the other. We must not be, like figures sculptured on a pediment, carved on one side only. We should often do well to remember the maxim, "*Laborare est orare.*" There is prayer in work; and sometimes it is a most noble prayer. From the clanging of a thousand hammers, from the rattle of a thousand wheels, from the roar of

a thousand furnaces, from the hum, and buzz, and grinding in a thousand factories, from street and house, from counter and store, from workshop and forge, from farmyard and dockyard, there goes up to heaven a strong, inarticulate voice, the glorious sound of man putting forth his best energy to do his duty, and claiming the reward promised: for those who sow plenteously, shall likewise reap plenteously.

And now we take a farewell look at those Christians on that Ascension Day. They stood upon the slope of Olivet, within a step of Jerusalem. They were gazing upwards, and their backs were towards that city which was to be the scene of their first mission-work. What time for gazing, when the second advent was so imminent, and so much must first be done! The great proud city basked in the sunshine of that summer day, and saw the light fleecy clouds, and the hills, and the trees. Where were the eyes that should have beheld that form upon the hills, passing with outstretched hands of blessing up beyond those clouds? A long task was before these disciples of an ascended Lord, and, at the angels' bidding, they went away with joy and worship in their hearts to set about it. That age-long task is for us still. More light, Christian brethren, "Why stand ye gazing up into heaven?"

WILD DREAMS, AWAY!

I.

AWAY, away, wild dreams, away;
Ambition, strife, farewell to-day.
Against each ill I'll shut the door;
To-day they wring my heart no more;
For I will be again a boy,
And live an hour of vanished joy;
I'll to the winds my cares unfold,
And taste life's freshness as of old.

II.

I'll leave these hearts that ache and moan,
These grasping spirits hard as stone;
I'll leave the hot and restless street,
The flowers afar shall clasp my feet;
The breeze shall fan my fevered brow,
The thoughts shall flee that haunt me now;
And I shall drink with raptured eyes
The glory of the summer skies.

III.

The music of the hills and woods,
The thunder of the mountain floods,
The whisperings of the forest leaves,
The bright fields with their golden sheaves,

The hedgerows green, the dusty road,
The creaking wain, the harvest load—
These and a thousand such shall be
Wealth, wealth enough this day for me,

IV.

Oh let me lie where with a song
The happy river glides along;
And let me see on airy wing
The wagtail from the boulder spring;
And let me hear the murmuring bee,
The brown bird in the hazel-tree,
And feel within this heart of mine
That life hath something yet divine.

V.

I'm weary of this thirst for gold,
Of all that makes life strange and cold—
This night of soul without a dawn,
These hollow eyes and faces wan;
And fain would for a while forget
The world and many a keen regret;
And, clasped in Nature's warm embrace,
Dwell with God's beauty face to face.

MATTHIAS BARE.

THE HALF-SISTERS.

BY THE AUTHOR OF "DEEPPDALE VICARAGE," "MARK WARREN," ETC.

CHAPTER LX.



ARCHIBALD had held his peace to Dolores on some matters. There had been no resuming of the conversation broken that sad day in June. He must have thought that the event so much and so openly talked of, would have reached her ear; but he never alluded to it. He was moody, sullen, and melancholy, but he never allowed her to share his thoughts. He had been unusually morose that day, and she had more than once been in tears; for her physical strength had been hard taxed, and was beginning to fail. Still, she had no tenderness from him—no thankful word, to give a fresh stimulus; none of those kind looks that are of such priceless value in the little economy of home. It was not in his nature to be kind; she began to think it never would be.

"I am tired enough of this sort of thing, I know!" he began to say.

"But you will soon get well now, Archibald. The fresh air——"

"If I do get better, I don't see what is to become of me."

He looked at her as he said it. She drew nearer still, and laid her hand on his.

"Of course, you'll have to be told, and there will be no end of whimpering. Look here, Dolores. You thought you were to be a very grand lady, I dare say. In fact, that was what you married me for."

She started and uttered a little exclamation of pain. But, after all, was it not the truth—the bare, naked truth? What else had she married him for?

"Yet I have been punished," thought she, "terribly punished!"

"I am afraid you will be sadly disappointed when you know what has happened to me."

She threw herself on her knees by his sofa. She laid her head on the cushion. "Dear Archibald, I can bear anything if you will only be kind to me!"

It was a touching appeal, and he felt it. It had never occurred to him before that mere kindness was worth a straw!

He raised the lovely head, with its long, shining tresses, and said, still in the same softened tone—"Then you won't leave me, Dolores, when you know?"

"I do know; and I will never leave you. I will try to help you bear it."

She said it with a glowing cheek. The bit of magnanimity there was in her nature had been awakened.

"You are very good to me, Dolores."

It was all the reply he made. He was tired, he began to say, and he would go in. He did not allude to the subject again that day; no, nor for several days, and the old fretfulness and impatience came back sevenfold.

It was a weary time for Dolores. If some germ of living principle had not been implanted in her heart she would have given way. Mere natural effort would have tired and failed; for the subject was a very graceless one. But the whole character of Dolores was undergoing a change. She would never again be the giddy, thoughtless creature of old.

She had her reward, however, though it tarried. One night she was sitting by her husband, when, after a long silence, in which he appeared to be revolving something, he said,

"Dolores, my mother is coming to see me."

"Is she? I am so glad."

"Why should you be glad, pray?"

"Because I think you will forgive her."

She said it softly, and with great tenderness. He did not answer all at once. Indeed, he did not answer that question at all.

"I would rather see her alone, Dolores. You have been shut up a long time in the house. Suppose you went out a little."

"I will walk in the grounds, dear. When you want me, you can send Wilkins."

He was silent another few minutes; then he said, "That will not be sufficient change for you, Dolores. I shall not want you for the next few hours. If you like, you can go and see Helen."

CHAPTER LXI.

"If you please, sir, Mrs. Cranstead is at the door, in her carriage."

Archibald was lying on the sofa at the further end of the room; he did not rise, or make any movement. He merely said, "She can come in here."

The door opened; there was a sound of some soft garment trailing along the floor. He had turned away his face; he neither moved, nor made the least sign of recognition, though he knew it was his mother.

"Archibald, won't you speak to me?"

She was standing in her desolate widowhood, in her garb of woe. No other son but would have gone to her with words of comfort. Not so, Archibald!

"You can sit down, mother, if you like, and say what you like. I suppose I must listen to you."

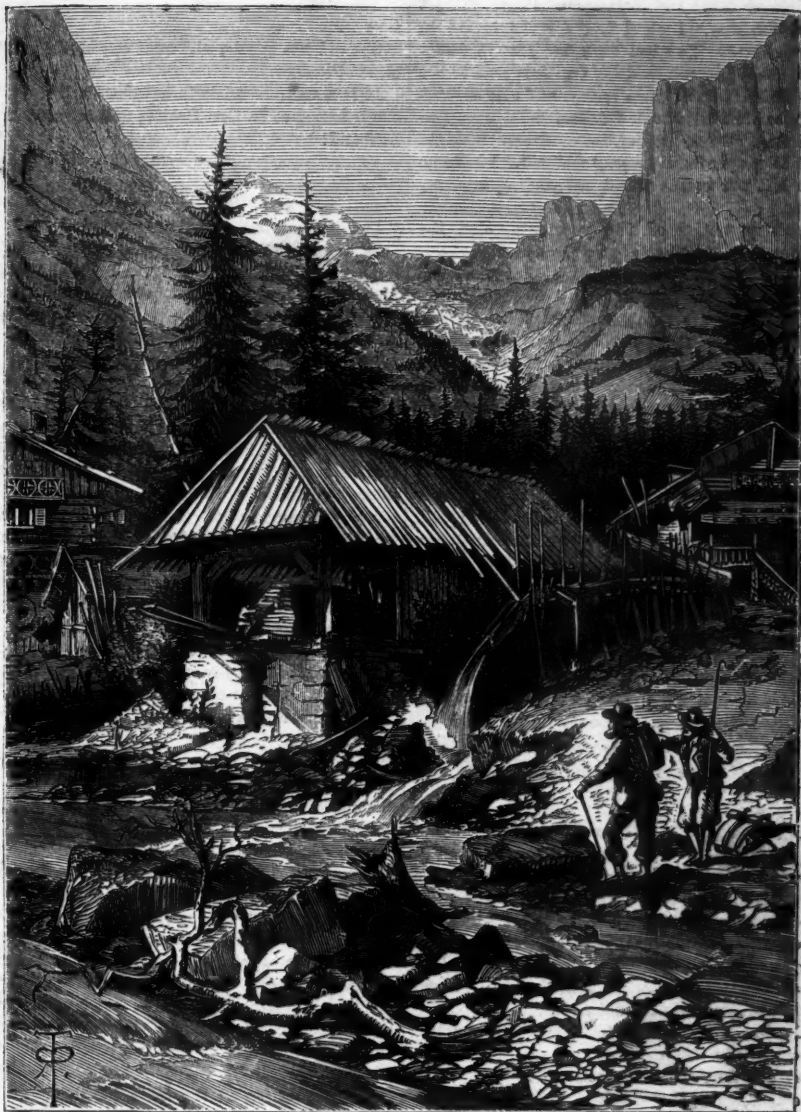
"Archibald," and she came forward, and sat down by him, and tried to take his hand, "Archibald, my son, my child; say that you forgive me."

"Then I should say a lie, mother. I don't forgive you, and never shall!"

He said it with all his old brutality of manner. She bowed her head on her hands, and was silent. Presently she spoke again, as calmly as she could.

"I am going to leave Cranstead. I have tried to repair the wrong I have inflicted on you, as far as I could; I know it is not much that I can do."

Again she bowed her head a few moments, to



(Drawn by R. T. PRITCHETT.)

"The music of the hills and woods,
The thunder of the mountain floods."—p. 823.

recover some degree of composure. Then she said: "I have a proposal to make to you, if you will accept it. My jointure is an ample one, and my wants are very few. I shall keep sufficient to protect me from necessity. I shall live for the future in strict retirement. You can have the rest to disentangle yourself from all liabilities, with regard to the estate. This is what I came to say, and also——"

Her voice almost broke down here.

"And also! Go on mother."

"Also to see you once more, Archibald. I have no one else left me in the world but you, my son, my son!"

He took no notice of the yearning voice, the plaintive wail of a mother's love. But he thought it worth while to rise. The subject of her visit had interested him.

"I think you are right, mother. I have been shamefully treated among you, and it is but fair that I should have some recompense. I must pay that rascal, Ernest Cranstead, the money I have taken out of the estate. But when is this thing between you and me to be settled?"

"It is settled now. I have put it in the hands of our solicitor. You can have the money any time."

"Thank you."

It was all he said. She went up and put her cold hand into his. He never asked when she was going, or said one kind word—no, not one!

When she was gone, he drew a chair to the table, and sat for some time engaged in making a calculation with pen, ink, and paper. Then having completed it to his satisfaction, he got up and began to walk about the room, whistling as he walked, and with his hands in his pockets. While he was thus occupied, in came Dolores.

"Archibald, what do you think has happened?"

"Indeed, I don't know, and I don't care, either."

"Joyce has come back! He came last night! Helen has seen him!"

"Oh, that fellow!—who cares anything about him?"

"I care!" exclaimed Dolores, the hot, angry tears in her eyes.

"I say, Dolores, come here, will you? I want you to add up those figures for me."

"Very well."

She was busy a few minutes; then she said, "Eight thousand pounds is what I make of it."

"And what I make it too. You are not a bad reckoner. Well, she may have that, and welcome."

"She! who do you mean, Archibald?"

"It is as much as she will want," continued Archibald. "It's my opinion that she won't be here long; my father's death has about knocked her up."

Dolores fixed her eyes steadily upon him. There was a compression about her mouth that was painful to behold.

"She has been here to-night to make a proposal. Of course, she ought to do something. That's her jointure, and a fine one too. She has offered to keep the eight thousand, and let me have the rest."

"And have you accepted her offer?"

Her voice had a shrillness in it. Her face was very hard and cold in its expression.

"Well, I think I have. I should be a fool to refuse it."

She did not speak; she went out of the room, and closed the door.

It is a terrible crisis in a woman's history, when she is forced to feel, as Dolores did, towards her own husband!

CHAPTER LXII.

"Ah! if I had but read those words before!"

It was Mrs. Chillingham who spoke, and it was Sophy who had just closed the book she had been reading to her aunt. That book was the Bible.

"If I had but known the true riches from the false, I should never have sinned against you, Sophy."

"Dear aunt, there is no need to think of that," said Sophy, tenderly.

Mrs. Chillingham was still at Dover, under the care and ministration of Sophy. But this was not to be for long. She was intending, now her health was in some measure restored, to join her husband abroad. She knew where he was. He had taken up his abode in one of the Swiss towns, where he was trying to get a living, he said, and a home. He wished his wife to come out to him, and she wished it too, as soon as her strength would permit; but she would go to him a strangely altered woman; one whose whole heart and mind were changed.

Mrs. Chillingham was to start the next day in the packet, and Sophy was to go to Mr. Westbury's on a visit. She knew what that meant: she knew that Mr. Westbury and his wife would grant her the shelter of their roof as long as she needed it. It was very kind of them, but Sophy shrank from the idea of dependence. She had a purpose which she had formed in her secret heart. It was to earn her own living.

"God has laid this burden on me," she would think, during her solitary strolls on the beach, "and he will help me bear it. I am in his hands."

It was Saturday afternoon when the packet sailed, and Mr. Westbury had arranged to run down from London that evening, spend Sunday at the seaside, and take Sophy back with him on Monday. It was not long, therefore, for her to feel herself deserted. Still, she was sad when she came back to her rooms; the Cransteads gone! her aunt gone! all seemed gone, to Sophy!

She was sitting at the table, her head leaning on her hands, her hat and shawl thrown aside, when a quick step went by the window. She thought it was Mr. Westbury, and she got up and wiped away her tears. She did not wish to obtrude her sorrows upon any one, least of all upon him. Was he not doing for her what he could?

A step in the passage—a voice—a well-known voice—that brought the colour to Sophy's cheek, and a gleam of delight to her eye. Then the door opened,

and then came in—not Mr. Westbury, oh, no!—then came in Alfred Kingston!

She had never seen him since the night when she had come to Dover to nurse her aunt. She guessed that he had much to do with the prolonged stay which she and her aunt had made; but she had heard nothing from him. If truth must be told, she had once or twice indulged a hope of his paying another visit to Dover, a hope which by this time had been put away as visionary. She had schooled herself well on this point; yet she could not help a consciousness of joy as she saw him.

"I am afraid your aunt is gone."

They were the first words he spoke, and a chill came over her; but she replied, "Yes, she is gone; she went at four o'clock."

"I was afraid I should be too late. I wished to see her, so much."

How could she be so foolish as to imagine that he took any special interest in her? It was one of those illusions which the sooner they are dispersed the better. Yet the illusion hovered over her again, when, a moment afterwards, he said—

"You have done your part as nurse to admiration. Your aunt, under God, owes her life to you."

"Do you think so? It was very little I could do."

"Little! Few people would have been so generous as to come at all."

A flush of pleasure mounted to her face. Her eyes were raised to his. He was looking at her so earnestly, that she dropped them, in some confusion.

"You are none the worse, I hope, for your fatigue? I have thought of you many times."

"Oh no! I am none the worse. I was so glad to do all I could. But I feel sorry that my aunt is gone;" and her lip quivered with a sense of renewed desolation.

"She did quite right to go," he replied, gravely. "And now," added he, changing his tone, "I am going to have a look at the sea; I am only here for a couple of hours. Will you go with me?"

"Yes, I should like it very much indeed!"

"Come then; put on your hat and shawl."

He said it in a tone of friendly authority, and he watched her as if he had some claim upon her.

Sophy's heart fluttered strangely.

There was ample time to walk along the sands, and watch the waves turn gently over with a soft, musical plash. They had not walked far before he made her sit down. He wanted a little quiet talk, out here, by the sea.

She sat down. It was very calm this afternoon, and very lovely. A sense of peace, and of protection stole into her mind when Alfred Kingston was by. He began, for once, to talk of his own affairs. He told her he had been promoted since he saw her last: he had been made a partner in the bank. On the strength of this, he told her he was about to make a change in his position.

"Do you remember my little room in Wells Street? You once did me the honour to come there."

"Oh yes, I remember!"

"I am going to leave it. I have taken a house outside the city."

"Have you?"

She spoke in a constrained voice; she was drawing circles on the sand with the end of her parasol.

"It is not a large house, such as you have been accustomed to. It is that white house, standing back in a garden, on the London road. Do you know which I mean?"

"Yes, I think I do."

"I mean to make it a nice place. I have a gardener at work, and I am furnishing. Think of that!" She laughed a little forced laugh.

"When I have all complete, I shall remove there."

One hand lay listlessly on her lap. Her eyes were fixed on the circles, as though she were working out a problem. Gradually, another and larger hand stole towards hers. Now, it had gathered the slender fingers into its grasp.

"Sophy, will you come there too?"

She trembled violently. Once, she felt an impulse to get up and run away; but the grasp of the hand detained her. The circles had come to an end.

"Sophy, our hearts, our aims, have long been one; is it not so?"

He drew her nearer to him. A whole world of tenderness was in his voice.

"Therefore, you must be my wife, Sophy!"

CHAPTER LXIII.

DOLORES seemed to have arrived at some conclusion—to have devised a plan of action, to be carried out at all hazards. She put on her shawl and bonnet, her face still set and stern, her eyes bright and tearless. Then she went down the staircase and out into the garden. Very soon she was on her way to the old home in the fields.

Helen, with a smile of calm happiness, was sitting at work in the porch, under the canopy of ivy and jessamine. Not at work for such as Mrs. Chillingham. Oh, no! those days had gone by. She was preparing for her marriage.

When she saw the little figure hurrying towards her, and the white, rigid face, she guessed that something was amiss. She dropped her work and came to meet Dolores.

"My darling, what is it—what is the matter?"

"Helen, you must come with me, now, at once."

"Come where, dear?"

"Helen, I must see him—Ernett Cranstead, I mean. My very life depends on it!" She spoke hurriedly, and with breathless eagerness. There was a look of anguish in her face that went to Helen's heart. "He came there last night. You will go with me to the abbey, Helen. You are quite at leisure, are you not?"

"Yes, dear; but—"

"Oh, don't say 'but!' Come with me—come at once. I cannot bear it, if—if—"

She stopped. She meant she could not bear it, if Archibald impoverished his mother.

But this phase of the matter was unknown to Helen. Helen's view was that Archibald was a ruined man, and at the mercy of Ernest Cranstead. All her sympathies were with Dolores. She had little hope of effecting anything by the interview so urgently desired by her sister. Still, she was too deeply moved by that sister's grief to hesitate a moment. She would go with her, and at once.

It was rather perplexing, too. Joyce had been with her all the morning, and had laid out a plan to which she had given her consent with joy. He had taken a house, he said, in the neighbourhood of Workstone, and he wanted her to see it. In fact, he would meet her there; and at this very moment the cab he had sent to fetch her was coming up the field. What should she do? The look of desperate misery in the face of Dolores brought her to a speedy conclusion. She would direct the man to drive to the abbey first. Joyce was kind and patient, and she could explain to him the reason of the delay. He would be quite willing that she should go. As she thought thus, she put on her bonnet, which lay on the table, and, giving her hand to her sister, "Come, then, my dearest; I am ready. We will drive there at once."

It was a silent journey: neither of the sisters spoke. Dolores' heart was too full of grief and anxiety to allow her to utter a word.

At length the city was passed through and left behind, and the cab turned in at the great iron gates of the abbey. Then Helen looked out.

"How beautiful this place is, to be sure!" exclaimed she, as if involuntarily. "I can feel the deepest sympathy for Archibald."

"Thank you, Helen. That is kind. I like people to feel sympathy for Archibald."

Again the woman's instinct spoke from the lips of Dolores.

The hired carriage stopped at the door. A footman came to open it. The new squire had arrived the night before, and all things were in order.

The two women stepped out and stood under the massive carved doorway. The device overhead repeated, in its mute language, "God give us peace."

Mr. Cranstead was at home, and the footman led the way into the library, the room in which Joyce had had his interview with the squire. The squire, alas! was gone. There was his vacant chair, and there was the portrait of Archibald hanging by the wall.

The eye of Dolores rested on it a single moment, and then passed on.

A quick, firm step on the mosaic pavement outside. Dolores trembled, and slid her hand into Helen's. Then, the door opened, and there appeared the genial kindly face of Joyce Meridale.

It was a momentary relief. They thought it had been Ernest Cranstead.

Helen went joyfully towards him. "Oh, Joyce, I am so glad you are come!"

There was the old delightful sense of protection, now Joyce, her own Joyce, was here!

"I am come, Helen, safe enough. Dolores, my

little Dolores." And he took her hand affectionately, "have you forgotten me?—your poor blundering, unlucky Joyce?"

"Oh, no! And I am very glad! very glad indeed! but I want to see Ernest Cranstead!"

She spoke in a tone of feverish impatience. Her eye wandered restlessly round the room.

"And you shall see him. Come, I will take you to him."

As he spoke, he led them from the room, and across the hall, and up the noble staircase. He had an air of self-possession and of freedom that was astonishing.

"Are you acquainted with Mr. Cranstead, Joyce?" asked Helen, in a tone of surprise.

"Yes, indeed I am! rather so, at least!" replied Joyce, with a smile.

"And what sort of a man is he?" came quick from the lips of Dolores.

"Well, he is like the rest of us; he has his faults."

"His faults! What, is he hard?—is he cruel?" She spoke with trembling eagerness. Her hand closed convulsively on Joyce's arm.

"I cannot tell, I am sure," replied Joyce, shortly.

They had come to the door of the picture gallery. It was a long room, running along one entire side of the abbey. Here were portraits of all the Cransteads, who had ever lived, since that famous time of Henry VIII. and the suppression of monasteries.

Joyce led them past squire and dame, dressed in the quaint devices of that ancient period, till he reached the further end of the gallery; then he stopped.

They wondered what he meant. Dolores cast a hurried glance round; she was thinking all the time of Ernest Cranstead.

"Now," said Joyce, drawing the sisters forward, "I am going to show you a likeness of Ernest Cranstead's father, the late squire's elder brother. See! there he is!" Two portraits hung side by side. One was that of the late squire himself; the other, that of his brother, Ernest.

The two faces seemed to look out from the canvas, for they were speaking likenesses, both of them, and painted by eminent artists. The sisters paused to gaze.

One face was that of a man getting old and careworn, and there were wrinkles on the brow, and furrows on the cheek; the other was full of youth, and gladness, and beauty.

It was curious how that younger face riveted their attention. How all else was forgotten in looking upon it. For another face still seemed to be present before them. A likeness strange indeed, but irresistibly forcible, flashed on their apprehension. The open brow, the sunny eye of blue, the genial expression, they knew it well—they had seen it again and again. They saw it now—in the countenance of Joyce Meridale!

It was impossible not to see a link between the living face and the face yonder on the canvas; and there came over the minds of the sisters that well-

known sensation which precedes a great discovery—a startling surprise. Their eyes rested inquiringly on Joyce.

He smiled. Why, the picture wore just that smile. The likeness was more wonderful still. A kind of fascination seemed to rivet them to the spot.

"How very much he is like you, Joyce! Why, it is you yourself!" exclaimed Helen, speaking the words involuntarily;—"you yourself," repeated she, with emphasis.

He took their hands tenderly in his. He drew them near him with an air of loving protection. "He is like me, dear ones; it must be so, from one simple fact—Ernest Cranstead was my father!"

Ernest Cranstead was his father! At first the words sounded too unreal to be believed. Neither Helen nor Dolores entertained the idea for a moment. They thought that Joyce was speaking in joke. But when he made them sit down before that very portrait, that bright, sunshiny face, the embodiment of his own, and, holding their hands in his, repeated in sober seriousness, "Ernest Cranstead was my father," then it became a different matter; then there rushed into their minds many things that had not yet occurred to them—the obscure origin of Joyce; the mystery that had always clung about him; how he had been brought up by strangers, and had never known either father or mother; how he had been even called an adventurer, though that he never was; the equal obscurity in which the younger Ernest Cranstead had been enveloped, and from which he had only just emerged; then the wonderful likeness, and, above all, the statement of Joyce himself.

Incredible and startling as the fact appeared to be, it must be true. And if true, what then? Neither Helen nor Dolores dared to think of it. If so, Joyce was the master of Cranstead Abbey! And Joyce master of Cranstead! there were no more fears, no more sorrows—humanly speaking, at least—and no more griefs! For he told them, still sitting before the portrait, whose every lineament attested the truth of his story—he told them how, some months ago, the squire had written to him, to confess the whole matter; how he had assured him that every doubtful point was cleared up, and he was prepared to establish him in his rights as the owner of Cranstead; how on receipt of the tidings—and astounding tidings they were—he had started home at once, but too late to have an interview with the squire. Death had removed him, ere Joyce touched the shores of England; but the substance of the squire's intentions remained the same, and had been carried out to the letter.

He never told—for Joyce was too generous for that—he never told that the master of Cranstead had sought to drive him from England, and was, in fact, the secret enemy from whom he had suffered so much; and how the Solly business was a hoax and a cheat, and likely to prove his ruin. He did not mention these things, because atonement had been made;

neither would he speak ill of the dead. But after a time, every detail connected with the circumstance oozed out, and Joyce could not help it; neither could he help a shadow being cast on the memory of the late master of Cranstead Abbey.

The next two hours passed swiftly, and as in a dream, and then Dolores knew that she must return home. She had made her appeal to Joyce, and Joyce had responded as he was sure to do.

"My little Dolores,"—he had often been used to call her by this title—"I am sorry you should have thought it necessary to introduce the subject. The sums you speak of have been remitted already. It was the first piece of business that I attended to."

Helen was now the mistress of the abbey. The elder Mrs. Cranstead had been courteously invited to remain, and care taken that she should not be the loser by her son's brutality. But the poor dethroned lady of Cranstead had gone into strict retirement, and could never be induced to leave it. She did not return to Cranstead until the day she was brought back, her earthly trials ended, to be laid to rest by the side of her husband, under the stained glass window in the little church.

Archibald had scattered his household gods to the winds, and taken his wife abroad. Helen had only seen her once before her departure, and the memory of that once would haunt her for many a year.

She could never forget, no, not amid all her happiness, that face so blank and hopeless—that clinging, passionate embrace—that sharp cry of agony. She heard it still in the quiet of the night. It was the one sorrow of her life. The one bitter drop in a cup otherwise so full of sweetness.

There was a saying in the neighbourhood, that Mrs. Archibald Cranstead had only herself to blame; that as she had chosen her lot, so she must abide by it. But Helen could not so reason; she only knew that Dolores—her best beloved Dolores—was gone!

Sorrow has its end sometimes, even in this world.

Some years after, there came back a wan, worn woman, prematurely old, and wearing the garb of a widow—one whose shining locks were tinged with grey, and whose smile had lost its sweetness. That was Dolores!

She came back, bereaved and almost destitute, to seek a home with Helen.

Oh how gladly was that granted her! how eagerly were the kind arms opened to receive her! how tenderly were the wounds bound up! how lovingly were the necessities ministered to!

Helen and Dolores are united, and till death comes to part them, they will never be separated again. And Dolores is comparatively happy. Helen's children are around her, and their prattling voices help to charm away her grief. And she has a deeper solace still than any this world can give. She has found at length forgiveness and peace.

THE END.

HELPFUL NELLIE.

A STORY FOR THE YOUNG.

IT was early morning—a cold, wet, winter's morning. The rain did not descend in torrents, but it drizzled through a thick fog, making those who were compelled to leave their beds and turn out in it very uncomfortable. It was still dark, and the gas-lamps shone upon the wet, splashy streets, when the loud clang, clang of the mill-bells sounded, which summoned hundreds of busy workers from their slumbers, to face the biting north-east wind.

"Is it a fine morning, Nellie?" asked a poor woman, in a querulous voice, as her little daughter slipped out of bed, and pulled aside the thin old curtain that flapped with the draught that entered the rickety casement.

"I can't see, mother, but I think I can hear the rain splashing on the stones in the court, and—yes, that's the mill-bell, I must make haste;" and the little girl slipped on her clothes as quickly as she could. "I've brought in the wood and coals, and filled the kettle, mother, so that you will not have to step out in the cold before I come home at dinner-time."

"I don't know what I should do without my helpful Nellie," said the mother, fondly, as the little girl knelt down by the bedside for a few minutes. Then she took up the little can containing her breakfast, and hurried out.

She was a little girl, very diminutive for her age, and very delicate looking, as in truth she was. She drew the little thin cotton shawl closer round her shoulders, as the wind came whistling up the narrow entry, and the next minute she started and shivered, for in the dark, narrow court she could not see where she was going, and stepped into a puddle of water, which struck cold and chill through her whole frame.

"Milly is not up yet," she said, as she emerged into the narrow street, and gazed at the house opposite; and she ran across and knocked loudly at the door. "Make haste, or you will be late," she called, as there came an answering tap at the window, and then she ran down the street as fast as she could.

She soon caught up to the crowd of workpeople, who were pressing in at the mill-gates; and was welcomed with a smile by many as she came up, breathless with her run.

"Nellie, we shall get the holiday, next Wednesday, father says," whispered one of her companions, a girl about her own age, but head and shoulders taller than herself; "I mean to have a new bonnet, with pink roses in it, and go out for the day somewhere. Will you come with us?"

"I don't think I can," said Nellie; "I'm sure I can't," she added, quickly, "I couldn't afford it; and, besides, mother is very ill now, and will be glad to have me at home."

"How tiresome, to be sure! and I wanted you to help me make my new bonnet. I suppose you won't be able, as you are teaching that little plague, Billy, to read, of an evening."

"Oh, yes, I'll contrive to help you with your bonnet, Annie, although I cannot go out with you," said Nellie, cheerfully.

By this time the girls had reached their own department in the mill, and separated—Annie to stand at the loom, and Nellie to take her seat on the low stool underneath, for Nellie was Annie's piecemer. A monotonous task for a little girl, to sit all day and watch for the threads of cotton that passed, and piece or tie them if they broke; and yet Nellie was glad to do this, for her mother was ill, and unable to work now, and her father was dead, so that the earnings of her brother and herself was all that the family had to depend upon.

At eight o'clock the bell rang again, and then the whirr, whirr of the machinery suddenly stopped, the multitudinous wheels were still, and the little weary workers left their places, and, with their breakfast-cans beside them, sat down in groups, to talk and laugh as they ate their morning meal. Hungry they all were, undoubtedly, and many of them had brought a plentiful supply of food; but one or two—Nellie among the number—seemed to have nothing but a little soaked bread in their cans. It was evident Nellie did not wish her companions to notice her now, for she sat a little apart from the rest, and, presently, half her scanty breakfast was transferred to an empty can, and thrust into the hands of its half-famished little owner, who, but for Nellie's kindness, would frequently have gone without breakfast entirely. The actual work of eating, where there was so little to eat, did not occupy many minutes, and then Nellie produced a book from her pocket, and her companions gathered round, while she read "The Story of Joseph and his Brethren," until the bell summoned them to their work again.

At dinner-time they all went home, some with the anticipation of enjoying a warm wholesome meal; and some, like poor little Kitty, uncertain whether they could gain entrance to their miserable homes. Nellie neither expected the one nor feared the other. Her mother was too ill to do anything now, and so all the household duties of sweeping and cleaning fell to Nellie to perform, as she ate her dinner of bread and potatoes. But she had neither time nor inclination to complain; it was as much as she could do to get all made comfortable for her mother before the bell rang for her to return to her work. On her way back, she called upon a poor old woman, and, after fetching her a pail of water, left her book, "The History of Joseph," promising to call for it in the evening. This hindered her a few minutes, and she was only just in time to get in before the mill-gates closed.

"I wish you hadn't been late, I wanted to show you something," whispered Annie, as she went to her place.

About an hour afterwards, some visitors called at the mill, and, in consequence of their wishing to see over it, some part of the machinery had to be stopped. The loom at which Nellie worked was one so stopped, and she, glad of the respite to stretch her cramped limbs, left her seat. Annie left her place likewise.

"Now, Nellie, I want your fairy fingers to touch up these flowers for me," she said, opening a small box, and producing two or three half-soiled crumpled roses. "If you can't make these look very nice," she said, "I shall have to buy some new ones, and then poor little Jimmy won't be able to have the shoes I've promised to buy him."

"Poor little fellow, you must let him have his shoes," said Nellie; and she set to work to smooth out and straighten the tumbled leaves and flower-buds.

She had nearly completed her task, when the machinery was suddenly set in motion again. She put down the flowers, instantly, passing them to Annie, as she tried to slip back to her seat. Some one called to her not to attempt to do so, but the warning came too late; one arm became entangled with the rollers as she was passing, and, before the machinery could again be stopped, it was crushed—almost flattened, and nearly torn from its socket.

She was at once conveyed to the hospital, while some one went to inform the poor widow of what had happened to her "Helpful Nellie."

The visitors—several gentlemen—with the mill-owner, Mr. Watson, returned to the carding-room, when they heard of the accident, and found nearly all the workpeople in tears, for Nellie was everybody's favourite, as she was everybody's helper and comforter. All this Mr. Watson heard before he left the mill, and he determined to befriend the poor girl. He accordingly went to the hospital, when Nellie began to get better. Her arm had been taken off, and she was gaining strength rapidly now. But with returning health, had come anxieties, as to how she was now to support herself and help her mother—for, of course, she could not work at the mill again; and she had, likewise, overheard the doctor say that, if this accident had not occurred, she would not have been able to continue her work there long, as it would have sent her into consumption, so that she knew she could not be very strong. Yet she determined to do something, and had already formed a plan, when Mr. Watson called, and asked what she thought of doing in future, reminding her that she could not do any hand-work now.

"Well, sir, I'm determined to do something to help mother," answered Nellie, bravely; "I can carry boot-laces, and pins, and tape, if I cannot work; and all the mill people have promised to buy of me."

"Then you have already settled upon your future mode of life," answered the gentleman, smiling.

"Yes, sir—that is, if I can get nothing better; I would rather do something else—work for my living," added brave, independent Nellie.

"And what work would you like to do?"

"Any kind of work, sir."

"Are you fond of reading," asked the gentleman, glancing at the books on the bed.

"Yes, sir; that's Kitty's spelling-book," she said, as Mr. Watson picked up a "Reading made Easy."

"And who's Kitty? and what do you do with her book?" asked the gentleman, curiously.

"She's Mary Lane's piecener, sir, and I'm trying to teach her to read," answered Nellie, blushing.

"And do you like that—teaching her, I mean?"

"Oh, yes, sir, very much."

"Well, now, how do you think you should like to learn to keep school?" said the gentleman.

"I mustn't think about how much I should like it, sir, because I never can; I don't know enough myself."

"But you could go to school again, and learn more. Do you think you would like that?"

"Yes, sir; I should like it better than anything else in the world," answered Nellie, mournfully.

"Very well, then, you shall go, and I will bear the expense," said the gentleman.

But Nellie did not look so pleased as he expected; indeed, the tears stood in her eyes, and she looked very sorrowful. At length she managed to say—

"Thank you, sir, very, very much; I should like to go to school, but I must help my mother as soon as I get well."

"You seem to have helped everybody that came in your way," said the gentleman, deeply touched with this proof of the little girl's unselfishness, "and, therefore, it is but fair that you should be helped now. How much did you earn at the mill?"

Nellie told him how much her earnings amounted to, and, likewise, that it had been continued during the time she had been in the hospital.

"And it shall be continued until you can earn more by keeping school," said Mr. Watson.

"Oh, sir!" was all Nellie could say, in her joyful thankfulness, for the great wish of her heart was now about to be accomplished. "I cannot thank you," she added, with swimming eyes.

"I need no thanks," said Mr. Watson. "Always remember those words: 'With what measure ye mete, it shall be measured to you again;' and ever continue Helpful Nellie."

EMMA LESLIE.

ANSWER TO SCRIPTURE ACROSTIC ON PAGE 816.

"Abner."—2 Sam. iii. 6—29.

1. A binadab..... 1 Sam. xvii. 13.
2. B arabbas..... Luke xxiii. 18, 19.
3. N ahass..... 1 Chron. xix. 2.
4. E utychus..... Acts xx. 9.
5. R ehoboth..... Gen. xxvi. 22.

NEW BOOKS.

AN institution more than 300 years old deserves some kind of record—and, above all, an institution so truly good and great as that of Christ's Hospital. We doubt if, since the days of its founder, Edward VI., there has been one more popular, or one more solid, as well as brilliant, in its results. The names alone of those famous "Blues," Coleridge, Lamb, Leigh Hunt, Bishop Middleton, William Camden, are sufficient to support its fame; but the amount of work done during these 300 years, and the literal army of boys who have received from it, not only education, but a fair start in the world, are, indeed, beyond all computation. All honour to the memory of the Boy-king, the first really Protestant ruler of England, whose dying act the foundation of this hospital had been. In the book* now before us, we find an interesting anecdote, relating under what circumstances King Edward first became impressed with the grand idea of doing something for the good of his poorer fellow-creatures:—

"Bishop Ridley, happening to preach before his Majesty at Westminster, in 1552, on the excellence of charity, made a fruitful and godly exhortation to the rich to be merciful unto the poor, and, also to move such as were in authority to travail, by some charitable ways and means, to comfort and relieve them. The earnestness of this appeal touched the royal heart; Edward was moved to sympathy, and 'understanding that a great number of small people did swarm in this realm, and chiefly in the City of London, and that no good order was taken of them,' sent the bishop a message at the close of the sermon, and desired him not to depart till he had spoken with him. Accordingly, they met in a private gallery, where the bishop was told to be seated, and remain covered. . . . Ridley observed, that the City of London was the most favourable place for the exercise of the royal bounty, and advised letters to be forthwith sent to the Lord Mayor, desiring him to call a meeting of such councillors as he thought most suitable, and confer upon the matter."

To all who are interested in the "Blues," as they are called, and especially to the Blues themselves, these "Annals" are likely to become valuable, as being terse, accurate, and tolerably complete.

Equally worthy of our notice is a "Suggestive Commentary on St. Luke,"† of which we have re-

ceived the first volume, which takes us to the end of the twelfth chapter. This little work gives evidence of much thought and deep research, and reflects no small credit upon the author, whose aim "has been to simplify Divine truth, and to condense in some degree the results of Biblical criticism. Many ministers in our busy age," he goes on to say, "with little leisure for study amid pressing duties, and Bible-class teachers with still less time, will welcome any aid, however humble." From what we have seen of the book, so far, we think the student will find in it assistance by no means contemptible.

"The Christian Year-book"* is a most praiseworthy attempt to collect into a portable volume a résumé of the efforts of all Christian denominations during the past year. The result is very successful, and such a work as this must become indispensable. As a collection of religious statistics, the present volume is really invaluable.

An excellent poetry-book† for children is "The Story of Jesus in Verse." The principal events in our Lord's history are told with clearness and force, and a child by committing these verses to memory, would have the facts and truths of the Gospel well impressed on his mind. Parents and teachers of young children will find this little book very useful to them.

The writer of "Reason and Religion"‡ assumes, as he has a right to do, that no truth of any kind can suffer from inquiry, least of all the truth of God. Evidences sustaining ordinary laws and conclusions of nature and science, may be—because they have been—mistaken and misapplied; but the believer in a Divinely-inspired revelation has the highest class of evidence on which to rest. His feeling is, "Let God be true, and every man [who demurs] a liar." There is an experimental tone in this volume. "In earlier life," the author states, "he had to do battle with doubts and questionings of every kind," &c. &c. "Possibly, arguments that were of use to him may prove serviceable to others." We have risen from the volume with a similar impression, and strongly recommend its perusal to young men who have felt themselves unable to be truly and heartily loyal in their obedience to the injunction—"Be ye not of doubtful mind."

* "The Christian Year-book; containing a Summary of Christian Work and the Results of Missionary Effort throughout the World." London: Jackson, Walford, and Hodder, Paternoster Row.

† "The Story of Jesus in Verse." By Edwin Hodder. London: Jackson, Walford, and Hodder.

‡ "Reason and Religion; or, The Leading Doctrines of Christianity." By the Rev. R. E. Hooppell, M.A., F.R.S.E., of St. John's College, Cambridge, Head-Master of the Marine School of South Shields. London: William Macintosh and Co.

* "Annals of Christ's Hospital, from its Foundation to the Present Time; and of the Original Conventual Church of the Grey Friars." By a "Blue." With six full-page Photographs by Blanchard. London: Lothian and Co., Amen Corner, Paternoster Row.

† "A Suggestive Commentary on St. Luke: with Critical and Homiletical Notes, on an Original Plan." By the Rev. W. H. Van Doran. Vol. I. London: E. D. Dickinson, 92, Farringdon Street.

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